



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

Thinkfinity.orgSM
supported by the Verizon Foundation

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin receives \$50,000 to provide innovative resources to teachers
Verizon Foundation grant to provide educator training for Thinkfinity.org

MADISON—State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster today announced that the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has received a \$50,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation to train teachers to use the free educational resources available on Thinkfinity.org and to raise awareness of the program within the state.

“The Department of Public Instruction is very pleased to be the recipient of this grant from the Verizon Foundation,” said Burmaster. “Thinkfinity.org provides safe, authoritative, Internet resources for our teachers to use to foster higher achievement for all students and promotes engaged learning that helps to close the achievement gap.”

Thinkfinity.org is the Verizon Foundation’s free, comprehensive program and online portal to more than 55,000 educational resources, including standards-based, grade-specific, K-12 lessons plans and interactive tools and materials for students. The resources are provided in partnership with many of the nation’s leading educational and literacy organizations.

“Teachers are often our unsung heroes, working hours outside of the classroom to prepare the best possible lesson plans to engage their students,” said Verizon President – Great Lakes Region Gale Given. “Through Thinkfinity.org, teachers gain immediate access to quality educational resources to efficiently develop their lesson plans, giving them more time to work directly with students.”

Thinkfinity.org offers resources to teachers at all grade levels across eight academic disciplines, from science to English to mathematics, to improve student achievement. Thinkfinity.org is designed to help teachers gain free access to research-proven online resources and best practices quickly. Thinkfinity.org resources are available 24/7, and require no passwords or software downloads.

(more)

Content for Thinkfinity.org is provided through a partnership between the Verizon Foundation and 11 of the nation's leading organizations in the fields of education and literacy: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, International Reading Association, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Center for Family Literacy, National Council on Economic Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy Worldwide and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

The DPI will use the grant to:

- provide professional development opportunities to Wisconsin educators statewide through on-site and online professional training;
- provide Thinkfinity.org resources aligned to Wisconsin state standards for educators and students through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction educator resource portal – WINSS Curriculum Resource Center and supported nationally on Thinkfinity.org; and
- raise awareness and effective use of Thinkfinity.org resources through a Wisconsin statewide field-training network and a Wisconsin customized online professional course.

"We appreciate the work Thinkfinity.org is doing to align these excellent resources and best practices to our Wisconsin Model Academic Standards," added Burmaster. "As we review our standards to focus on rigorous and relevant curriculum that will help students succeed in the 21st century global economy, the Thinkfinity.org resources will continue to align with our standards."

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, supports the advancement of literacy and K-12 education through its signature program, Thinkfinity.org, and fosters awareness and prevention of domestic violence.

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NOTES: This news release is available electronically at http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/eis/pdf/dpi2008_62.pdf. Additional information about the Verizon Foundation is available at <http://www.verizon.com/foundation>.